

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
December 13 & 14, 2005**

The regular meeting of the Washington State Transportation Commission was called to order at 9 A.M., on December 13, 2005 in Room 1D2 of the Transportation Building in Olympia, Washington.

Commissioners present at the meeting were: Chair O'Neal, Bob Distler, Dick Ford, Elmira Forner, and Dale Stedman.

Chairman O'Neal announced that Commissioner Barnes was not present because he had undergone major heart surgery within the past week.

MINUTES APPROVAL

It was moved by Commissioner Forner and seconded by Commissioner Stedman to approve the meeting minutes for October 18 & 19, 2005. The motion passed unanimously.

TOLLING STUDY WORKSHOP, CAMBRIDGE SYSTEMATICS, INC.

Jeff Buxbaum, Project Manager, Cambridge Systematics, Inc., provided a brief overview of today's presentation. He explained that the purpose and objective of the study is to create a process that facilitates the state's ability to make policy level decisions on if, where, when, and how to toll (please refer to agenda item 2 handout for information on this presentation).

Frank Wilson, Frank Wilson and Associates, provided an overview of statewide perception that came from interviews with stakeholders and representatives around the state. Stakeholders emphasized that there must be a clear picture of expectations, goals and what the potential benefits of tolling are.

Chair O'Neal welcomed Senator Bob Oke to the table.

Senator Oke explained that he has experienced what occurs when the public is not educated and involved in the process. It's important to keep the communication open. He actively participated in the discussion of tolling as it relates to the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.

Commissioner Ford asked the Commission for its consensus to move forward in adding an addendum to the contract to include a public outreach survey.

It was moved by Commissioner Forner and seconded by Commissioner Stedman to amend the Tolling Study contract to reflect the inclusion of a public outreach survey. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Buxbaum provided an overview of the draft interim report. The report encompasses the Commission's role in tolling and how tolling should be utilized, whether it be system management or as a funding tool.

Other issues that must be faced are deciding what parts of the system to toll and price setting.

Victor Poteat, PBS&J, provided a briefing regarding the most appropriate governance and organization structure.

Bart Cima, IBI Group, provided an overview of key technology policy considerations. Some of the issues that must be addressed are: toll setting authority; interoperability; customer service; enforcement policy and procedures; cost allocations and technology upgrades.

David Ungemah, Texas Transportation Institute, provided an overview of equity and fairness topics. He explained that there is a need for a consistent and knowable process for tolling. A concern is geographic equity along with an existing distribution that may be perceived as unfair.

Mr. Buxbaum provided an overview of the implications of alternative toll policies on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge (TNB). Tolls are not yet set on the TNB. The Commission and the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) will hold workshops on toll setting scheduled to begin in Spring/Summer 2006. The CAC will make recommendation to the Commission, hearings follow, and the Commission sets tolls March 2007.

Commissioner Distler inquired whether or not the Commission has the authority to adjust tolls. Ms. Arnis responded that the Commission has the authority to adjust tolls, but not the obligation.

Commission members and presenters had an active exchange of ideas.

PUBLIC AND LEGISLATOR COMMENT PERIOD

Representative Kilmer shared discussion with the Commission regarding toll setting and equity. Chairman O'Neal invited Representative Kilmer to the Commission's table. He actively participated in the exchange with Commissioners and presenters.

Don Williams, citizen, shared his concerns regarding toll setting on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.

Michael Murphy, citizen, shared his concerns regarding toll setting on the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.

Paul Locke, citizen, shared his concerns regarding the impact of buses on streets and highways.

SELECTION OF RAIL STUDY CONSULTANT

Barb Ivanov, Director, Freight Strategy & Policy, provided a briefing to the Commission regarding the selection of the Rail Study consultant. She provided an overview of the scope of the study along with 10 key tasks. The Commission's Rail Study Team recommends that the contract be awarded to Cambridge Systematics, Inc., and its sub contractors; Berk & Associates, Inc., Global Insight, Inc., HDR, Inc., Starboard Alliance Company, Transit Safety Management and Williard F. Keeney & Associates.

It was moved by Commissioner Ford and seconded by Commissioner Stedman to award

the legislative mandated Rail Study contract to Cambridge Systematics, Inc. The motion passed unanimously.

FREIGHT AND GOODS SYSTEM FINAL REPORT ADOPTION

Elizabeth Stratton, Freight Policy and Project Manager, presented the Freight and Goods Transportation System (FGTS) 2005 update. She provided an overview of the executive summary highlights of FGTS roadway classifications.

It was moved by Commissioner Ford and seconded by Commissioner Stedman to adopt the Freight and Goods System Final Report. The motion passed unanimously.

AVIATION STUDY UPDATE

John Sibold, Director, Aviation Division, WSDOT, provided an overview of the Statewide Air Transportation Study. The study consists of three phases that will aid in determining current capacity and what will be needed to meet future demands. He advised the Commission that the aviation consulting firm SH&E has been awarded a contract to assess current and future aviation system capacity, including both airport and airspace considerations. He also shared information regarding airport grant programs and goals.

INITIATING WAC PROCESS FOR SETTING 2006 FERRY FARES

Ray Deardorf, Planning Director, Finance, WSF, requested the Commission's approval to move forward with the 2006 CR 101 Code Reviser filing to initiate the tariff modification process.

Commissioner Distler requested that the Commission be provided an executive summary of public outreach in advance of the March 21, 2006 Commission meeting in order to afford the Commission a flavor of public reaction to the tariff proposal. Mr. Deardorf confirmed that such a summary would be made available in advance of the Commission hearing.

Chair O'Neal noted that the Commission sent a letter to the Legislature emphasizing the increase in fuel costs must be considered in the supplemental budget.

It was moved by Commissioner Ford and seconded by Commissioner Distler to approve filing of the 2006 CR 101 Code Reviser filing to initiate the tariff modification process. The motion passed unanimously.

REVISION OF WSDOT PROJECT FUNDING ADJUSTMENT AUTHORIZATION

Paula Hammond, Chief of Staff, WSDOT, requested that the Commission rescind its action on November 15, 2005 to transfer funds to the US 12 Attalia Vicinity to US 730 – Added Lanes Project. She commented on how the proviso effects adjustments to projects, and why the Commission should rescind this action.

It was moved by the Commission Stedman and seconded by Commissioner Distler to approve rescinding of the November 15, 2005 action to transfer funds to the US 12 Attalia Vicinity to US 73- Added Lanes Project. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioners Stedman and Ford suggested that a letter be sent to the Legislature requesting direction in defining projects and or phases of projects.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary MacDonald commented regarding Initiative 912 and the Department's commitment to project delivery. He briefly discussed staff recruitment and the Department's challenges in maintaining a skilled workforce. He also noted that there is open discussion with the City of Seattle and the Department on the Alaskan Way Viaduct proposed alternatives. He moved on to share WSF issues.

WSDOT 2006 AGENCY REQUEST LEGISLATION

Jennifer Ziegler, Director, Government Relations, WSDOT, provided an overview of Departmental request legislation. She shared highlights of specific proposed legislation and major transportation issues

COMMISSIONER/ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

Reema Griffith, Administrator, shared that the Commissions website continues to improve. New additions are the Tolling and Rail Study information.

Commissioner Distler shared information regarding the status of the construction of new ferries. Dialogue with members of the Senate and House Transportation Committees on this and other ferry-related issues is continuing.

Commissioner Stedman provided an update regarding the progress on the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP). He noted that the team is working closely with the Department to provide a user friendly WTP.

Commissioner Forner shared information regarding her participation on the Transportation Performance Audit Board. She noted that the Washington Safety Traffic Commission provided a report regarding its vision. She shared that the Public/Private Partnership team is moving forward with developing policy.

Commissioner Ford shared that he has been appointed to the Priorities of Government Committee. This Committee will address the direction that performance measures take.

Commissioner O'Neal shared that the Rail Study Team is moving forward with obtaining a project manager for the study.

The Commission meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m., on December 14, 2005.

WASHINGTON STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

DAN O'NEAL, Chair

DICK FORD, Vice-Chair

Absent

EDWARD BARNES, Member

VACANT

ELMIRA FORNER, Member

ROBERT S. DISTLER, Member

DALE STEDMAN, Member

DOUGLAS MACDONALD, Ex-Officio Member
Secretary of Transportation

ATTEST:

REEMA GRIFFITH, Administrator

DATE OF APPROVAL